

NEWS FROM

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Financial Aid Tip of the Month, March 2006

Some tips to help you do better on the ACT/SAT

If you're a high school student headed to college, you'll most likely take the ACT or SAT. These tips may help you bring home a better score.

The most important thing you can do to help yourself on these tests, of course, is to take care of business in your regular classes. Studying, doing your homework and remembering what you've learned longer than you need it for the next test in class are essential.

Beyond that, other things can help.

- Take practice tests. ACT offers sample tests at www.actstudent.org, and practice tests are included in the ACT booklet guidance counselors receive each year. If those aren't enough, you can buy larger practice books at any bookstore. SAT offers a practice test and test-taking approaches at www.collegeboard.com.
- Take advantage of ACT or SAT classes. Many high schools and colleges offer such classes for a small fee.
- Answer the questions you're sure about first, then go back and tackle the others. But don't spend too much time on any one question.
- Remember your first gut feeling is more often right than wrong.
- On the ACT, if you can eliminate one answer, you have a one-in-three chance of guessing the right answer. If you can eliminate two, you have a 50-50 chance. The ACT doesn't count off for wrong answers, so you haven't hurt yourself if you guess wrong. If you've answered the questions you're sure of and made educated guesses on others but have no clue about the rest, fill in any circle. Remember, wrong answers don't hurt your score.
- On the SAT, if you can rule out one or more answers for a multiple-choice question, you have a better chance to guess the correct answer. On most sections, however, the SAT counts off for wrong answers, so you need to be careful. If it's a math question where you aren't given answer choices, go ahead and guess. The SAT doesn't count off for wrong answers to those questions.
- Make sure you get a good night's rest the night before and you leave home early enough to get to the test site on time. And don't forget to bring some ID.

These tips are brought to you by The Student Loan Peoplesm and the Alabama Student Loan Program, which have helped thousands of students pay for college.

For more information about student financial aid and college planning, visit www.alstudentaid.com; write the Alabama Student Loan Program, 100 North Union Street, Suite 308, Montgomery, AL 36104-3761; or call 334-265-9720, toll free (800) 721-9720.